

Abstract of the Disclosure**MATCH SIGNALS IN DATA
SWITCHING SYSTEMS INCLUDING
MULTIPLE SWITCHING DEVICES**

5 A novel method of data packet switching in a data packet switching system having multiple switching devices. The method includes comparing destination address information of a received data packet with current address information maintained in an address table of one of the switching devices, and supplying a match
10 signal to other switching devices when the destination address information matches the current address information. As a result, all other switching devices in the system are informed that the host with the destination address that caused the match signal is not connected to one of their own media ports. The match signal sent to other switching devices in the system is unambiguously associated with the destination
15 address that caused the match. Also, the match signal may uniquely identify the switching device that generates this signal. In response to the match signal, the current address information of the other switching devices in the system may be updated in accordance with the destination address information that caused the match signal to forward traffic with that destination address to the appropriate switching device.